

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments, Applicants submit that this case is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A

The paragraph that begins on page 6, line 1 and ends on page 6, line 10 has been amended as shown below.

The protective housing 80 comprises a protective housing base 82 and a protective housing top 84. The protective housing top 84 is adapted to be removably coupled with the protective housing base 82. The protective housing 80 defines an internal cavity [86] that is sized and shaped to receive the splice housing 50. The protective housing 80 is utilized when the splice housing 30 is buried in the ground. The protective housing 80 serves to deflect the strain associated with backfilling an excavation in which the fiber optic cable 20 is located. One such protective housing is available from U-Teck. The protective housing is preferably assembled by bolting the various components to one another.

The paragraph that begins on page 9, line 4 and ends on page 9, line 9 has been amended as shown below.

In [an] a further preferred embodiment, the splice housing 50 can be enclosed within the protective housing 80 as depicted in FIG. 10. After splice housing 50 has been assembled, as described above, the splice housing 50 can be placed within the base of the protective housing 82 (step 710). The top of the protective housing 84 can then be coupled with the base of the protective housing [84] 82 (step 720).

APPENDIX B

Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 10, 14, and 15 have been amended as shown below.

1. (Amended) A fiber optic patch kit for patching a fiber optic cable having a first end and a second end, the kit comprising:

a fiber optic patch having first and second ends,

a first mechanical fiber optic splicer adapted to be coupled with the first end of the fiber optic cable and the first end of the fiber optic patch;

a second mechanical fiber optic splicer adapted to be coupled with the second end of the fiber optic cable and the second end of the fiber optic patch; and

a water-tight splice housing defining an internal cavity, the internal cavity being adapted to receive the first and second mechanical fiber optic splicers, the fiber optic patch, and a portion of the fiber optic cable.

2. (Amended) The fiber optic patch kit of claim 1, further comprising a protective housing defining an internal cavity, the internal cavity being adapted to receive the water-tight splice housing.

3. (Amended) The fiber optic patch kit of claim 1, further comprising a splice tray adapted to be removably disposed within the internal cavity of the water-tight splice housing.

4. (Amended) The fiber optic patch kit of claim 1, wherein the water-tight splice housing comprises:

a base having first and second ends;

a top adapted to be coupled with the base, the top having first and second ends;

a first end plate adapted to be coupled with the first ends of the top and base; and

a second end plate adapted to be coupled with the second ends of the top and base.

8. (Amended) A method for patching a fiber optic cable having a first end and a second end, the method comprising:

(a) creating a first angle cleave at the first end of the fiber optic cable;
(b) creating a second angle cleave at the second end of the fiber optic cable;
(c) mechanically splicing the first end of the fiber optic cable to a first end of a fiber optic patch;

(d) mechanically splicing the second end of the fiber optic cable to a second end of the fiber optic patch; and

(e) enclosing the fiber optic patch and portions of the first and second ends of the fiber optic cable within an internal cavity of a water-tight splice housing.

9. (Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein [the step of creating angle cleaves] (a) and (b) comprise[s] creating 45 degree angle cleaves.

10. (Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein [the steps of mechanically splicing] (c) and (d) comprise splicing the fiber optic cable and the fiber optic patch using mechanical fiber optic splicers.

14. (Amended) The method of claim [13] 8, further comprising enclosing the water-tight splice housing within an internal cavity of a protective housing.

15. (Amended) The method of claim [13] 8 wherein [the step of enclosing the fiber optic patch and portions of the first and second ends of the fiber optic cable within an internal cavity of a splice housing] (e) further comprises [the step of] creating an air-tight seal within the internal cavity of the water-tight splice housing.